THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

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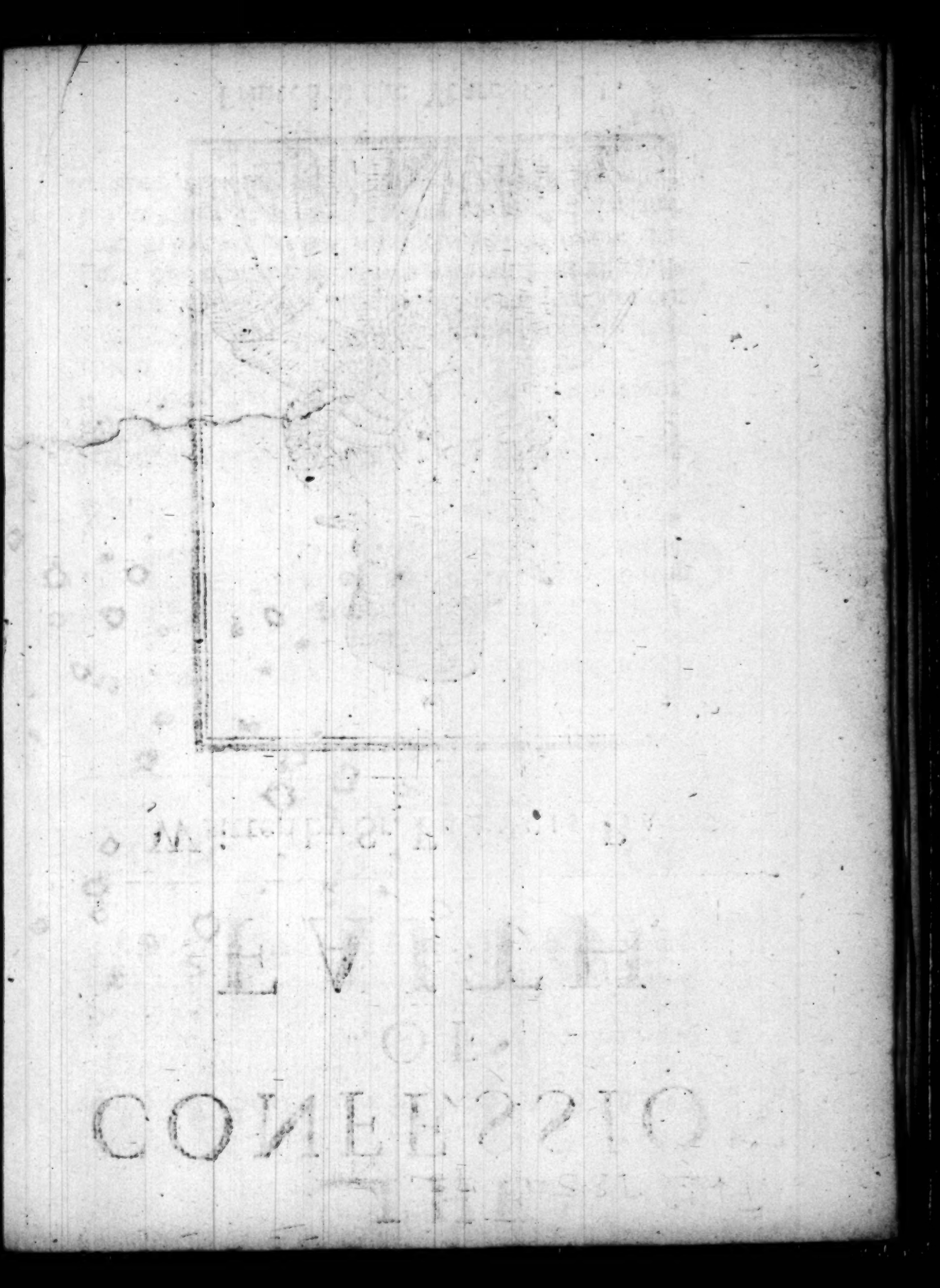

The Confeſsion of FAITH.

FIRST, I believe, That nothing is without beginning but God, no Nature, no Matter, no Spirit, no eſſence, but one onely, and the ſame God: That God, as he is Eternall, Almightie, onely wiſe, onely good in his Nature, ſo he is Eternally Father, Sonne, and Holy Spirit, in three perſons.

I believe, that God is ſo holy, pure, and zealous, that it is impoſſible for him to be pleaſed in any creature, though the worke of his owne hands, ſo that neither Angell, Man, nor World could ſtand, or can ſtand one moment in his eyes, without beholding the ſame in the face of a Mediator: And therefore that before him with whom all things are preſent, the lamb of God was ſlaine before all worlds; without which

eternall Counsell of God it was impossible for him to have descended to any worke of Creation, but should have enjoyed the blessed and individuall societie of the three persons in the God-head onely for ever, but that out of his eternall and infinite goodnesse and love, purposing to become a Creator, and to communicate with his Creatures, that so in the person of the Mediator, the true Ladder might bee fixed, whereby God might descend to his Creatures, and his Creatures might ascend to God; so that God by the reconcilement of a Mediator, turning his Countenance towards his Creatures, though not in the same height, and degree, made way unto the disposition of his most holy and sacred will, whereby some of his Creatures might stand, and keep their estates, others might fall, and be restored unto their estates, but yet remaine in being, though under wrath, and corruption, all in the vertue of a Mediator, which is the great mysterie, and perfect Center of all Gods wayes unto his Creatures, and unto which all his other Workes and Wonders doe but serve and referre.

That hee chose according to his pleasure man to be that Creature to whose Nature the eternall Sonne of God should be united, and amongst the generations of men hee elected a small flock in whom by the participation of himselfe he purposed to expresse the Rayes of his Glorie, all the ministration of Angels, damnation of Devills and Reprobates, universall administration of all Creatures, and dispensation of all times, have no other ends but as the waies and Ambages of God to be further glorified

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in his ſaints who are one with the Mediatour, who is one with God.

That by the vertue of God his Eternall Counſell touching a Mediator, he deſcended at his owne good pleaſure, and according to the times, and ſeaſons to himſelfe beſt knowne to become a Creatour, and by his eternall word created all things, and by his eternall ſpirit doth comfort, and preſerve them.

That hee made all things in their firſt eſtate good, and removed from himſelfe leaving the beginning of all evill, and vanitie unto the liberty of the creature, but reſerving in himſelfe the beginning of all reſtitution, and the liberty of his Grace, uſing nevertheleſſe, and turning the falling, and defection of the Creature, which to his preſcience was eternally known, to make a way to his eternall Counſell touching a Mediatour, & the work he purpoſed to accompliſh in him.

That God created Spirits, whereof ſome kept their ſtandings, and others fell, he created heaven, and earth, and all their Armies and Generations, and gave unto them conſtant and everlaſting laws, which we call nature which is nothing but the laws of the Creation, which lawsnevertheleſſe have had three changes, or times. and are to have their fourth and laſt.

The firſt, when the matter of Heaven and Earth was created without forme.

The ſecond, by the Interim of every days worke.

The third, by the curſe which notwithſtanding was no new Creation, but a privation of part of the firſt Creation.

And the fourth and laſt, at the end of the world the

the manner whereof is not yet revealed. So as the Lawes of nature which now remaine, and governe inviolably till the end of the world began to be in force when God rested from his worke, and ceased to create, but receaved a revocation in part by the curse since which time they change not.

That notwithstanding God hath rested from creating since the first Sabboth, yet nevertheless he doth accompliſh, and fulfill his divine will in all things, great and small, generall, and particular, as fully, and exactly by providence as he could doe by miracle, and new Creation, though his working bee not immediate, and direct, but by compasse, not violating nature which is his owne Lawe upon his Creatures.

That as at the first the soule of man was not produced of heaven, or earth, but was breathed immediatly from God, so that the wayes, and proceedings of God with Spirits are not included in nature that is in the lawes of heaven or earth, but are reserved to the lawe of his secret will, and grace whereby God worketh still, and resteth not from the worke of Creation, as he doth from the worke of Redemption, but continueth working to the end of the world, at what time also that work shalbe accompliſhed, and an eternall Sabboth shall ensue.

Likewise that whensoever God doth breake the laws of nature by miracles (which ever are new Creations) he never commeth to that point, or passe, but he hath regard to the work of Redemption which is the greater, and whereunto all Gods Saints and Martyrs doe refer.

That

That God created man in his own Image, or likeneſſe, in a reaſonable ſoule in innocencie, and ſoveraignty, that he gave him a law and command which was in his power to keep, but he kept it not.

That man made a totall defection from God, preſuming to imagine that the lawes, and prohibitions of God were not the rules of good, and evill, but that good and evill had their principles, and beginnings, and luſted after the knowledg of thoſe imaginary beginnings to the end to depend no more upon Gods will revealed, but upon himſelfe and his owne light as a God, then the which there could not be a ſin more oppoſite to the law of God.

That yet nevertheleſſe this great ſin was not originally moved by the malice of man, but was inſinuated by the Inſtigation, and ſuggeſtion of the Devill, who was the firſt defected creature, and fell of malice, and not by temptation.

That upon the fall of man, death, and vanity entered by the Juſtice of God, and the Image of God in man was defaced, and Heaven and Earth which were made for mans uſe, were ſubdued to corruption by his fall, but then that inſtantly, and without intermiſſion of time after the word of gods law, becauſe throgh the fall of man fruſtrate as to obedience there ſucceeded the greater word of the promiſe, that

the righteousnesse of God might be made, and wrought by faith.

That aswell the word of God as the word of his promise endure the same for ever, but that they have beene revealed in severall manners according to the dispensation of times, for the Law was first imprinted in that remnant of light of nature which was left after the fall beeing sufficient to accuse, it was more manifestly expressed in the written Lawes, it was yet more opened by the Prophets; And lastly expressed in the true perfection of the Son of God, the great Prophet, and perfect Interpreter of the Law.

That likewise the word of the promise was manifested, and revealed first by immediate Revelation and Inspiration, after by figures which were of two natures, the one the rights and Ceremonies of the Lawe, the other the continuall histories of the old world, and Church of the *Iewes*, which though it bee literally true, yet it is pregnant of a perpetuall Allegorie, and a shadow of the worke of Redemption, which was to follow, the same promise, or Evangell was more clearely revealed, and expressed by the Prophets, than by the Sonne himselfe, and lastly by the Holy Ghost, which illuminateth the CHVRCH to the end of the world.

That in the fullnesse of time according to the promise, and oath of GOD, of a chosen lineage

age deſcended the bleſſed ſeed of the Woman (Jeſus Chriſt, the onely begotten Son of GOD) and Saviour of the World, who was Conceived by the Power, and overſhadowing of the Holy Ghoſt, and tookfleſh of the Virgin MARIE.

That the Word did not onely take fleſh, or was joyned to fleſh, though without confuſion of Subſtance, or Nature, ſo as the Eternall Sonne of God, and ever bleſſed Sonne of *Mary* was one perſon, ſo one as the bleſſed Virgin may bee truely and Catholikely called *Dei para*, the Mother of GOD, ſo one, as there is no unitie in univerſall Nature, not that of the ſoule and bodie of man ſo perfect, for the three Heavenly Unities, whereof that is the ſecond, exceedeth all naturall Vnities, that is the unitie of the three perſons in the God-head, the Vnitie of God and Man in Chriſt, and the unitie of Chriſt in the Church; the Holy Ghoſt being the worker of both theſe latter unities: for by the Holy Ghoſt was Chriſt regenerate in the fleſh, and by the Holy Ghoſt is man regenerate and quickned in the Spirit.

That JESUS, the Lord, became in the Fleſh a Sacrificer, and a Sacrifice for ſinne, a ſatisfaction and price to the juſtice of God, a Meriter of Glorie, and of the Kingdome, a patterne of all Righteouſneſſe, a Preacher

of the Word, which himſelfe was a finiſher of the Ceremonies, a Corner ſtone, to remove the ſeparation betweene *Jew* and *Gentile*; an Interceſſion for the Church; a Lord of Nature in his Miracles: a Conqueror of death, and the power of Darkneſſe in his Reſurrection, and that hee fulfilled the whole Counſell of GOD performed his whole ſacred Office, and anoynting upon Earth, and accompliſhed the whole worke of Redemption, and Reſtitution of man to a ſtate ſuperiour to the Angels, where the ſtate of his Creation was inferiour, and reconciled, and eſtabliſhed all things according to the will of the Father.

That in the fulneſſe of time, JESUS the Lord was borne, in the dayes of *Herod*, and ſuffered under the Government of *Pontius Pilate*, being Deputie of the Romans, and under the High Prieſt-hood of *Caiphas*, and was betrayed by *Judas*, one of the twelve Apoſtles, and was Crucified at *Hieruſalem*, and dyed after a true and naturall death, and His Body layed in the Sepulcher, the third day Hee raiſed Himſelfe from the Bonds of Death, and aroſe, and ſhewed Himſelfe to many choſen Witneſſes, by the ſpace of divers dayes; and in the end of thoſe dayes in the ſight of many He aſcended into Heaven, where Hee continueth his Interceſ-

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ceſſion, and ſhall come in His appoynted time in greateſt Glorie for to judge the World.

That the ſufferings and Merits of Chriſt as they are ſufficient to doe away the ſinnes of the whole World, ſo they are effectuall to ſuch as are Regenerate by the Holy Ghoſt, who breatheth where Hee liſteth of free Grace; which Grace, as a Seed incorruptible, quickneth the ſpirit of Man, and conceiveth him a new the ſonne of GOD, and a member of CHRIST, ſo that CHRIST having Mans fleſh, and Man having CHRISTS Spirit, there is an open paſſage, and Imputation whereby ſinne and wrath is conveyed from Man to Chriſt; and Merit and Life is conveyed from Chriſt to Man, which Seed of the Holy Ghoſt firſt figureth in us the Image of CHRIST ſlaine, or Crucified in us in a Holy Faith, and then reneweth in us the Image of God in Holineſſe and Righteouſneſſe, though both imperfectly, and in degrees farre differing even in GODS Elect, as well in regard of the office of the Spirit, as the Illumination, which is more or leſſe in a large proportion, as namely in the Church before CHRIST, which nevertheleſſe was partaker of one and the ſame ſalvation with us.

That the worke of the Spirit, though it bee not tyed to any meanes in Heaven, or in Earth, yet it is ordinarily dispensed by the preaching of the Word, and administration of the Sacraments, the Covenants of the Fathers upon the Children, Prayers, Reading, the Censures of the Church, the society of the godly, the crosse and afflictions, Gods benefits, his judgements upon others, his great Miracles, the Contemplation of his Creatures, all which (though some bee more principall) God useth as the meanes of Vocation and Conversion of his Elect, not derogating from his power to call immediately by his grace, and at all houres, and moments of the day, that is, of mans life, according to his good pleasure.

That the Word of God, by which his Will is revealed, continued in revelation and tradition, untill *Moses*, and that the Scriptures were from *Moses* time untill the time of the Apostles, and Evangelists, in whose age, after the comming of the Holy Ghost, the searcher of all truth, the Booke of the Scriptures is shut up, and closed, and cannot receive any new addition, and that the Church hath no power after the Scriptures to teach or command any thing contrarie to the written Word; but is as the Arke wherein the Tables of the first Testament were kept and preserved; That is to say, the Church hath onely the custody and deliverie over of the

Scriptures.

Scriptures committed unto the ſame together with the Interpretation of them; that there is an Vniverſall, or Catholique Church of GOD diſperſed over the face of the Earth, which is Chriſts Spouſe, and Chriſts body beeing gathered of the Fathers of the old world of the Church of the *Iewes*, of the ſpirits of the faithfull diſſolved, of the ſpirits of the faithfull militant, and of the Names yet to bee borne, which are already written in the Booke of Life,

That there is alſo a viſible Church diſtinguiſhed by the outward workes of GODS Covenant, and the renewing of the holy doctrine with the uſe of the myſteries of GOD, and the Invocation, and Sanctification of his holy name: that there is alſo an holy ſucceſſion in the Prophets of the new Teſtament, and the Fathers of the Church from the time of the Apoſtles, and Diſciples, which ſaw our Saviour in the fleſh, unto the Conſummation of the worke of the Miniſterie, which perſons are called of GOD by gift or Inward anoynting, and the vocation of GOD followed by an outward calling, and ordination of the Church: I beleeve that the ſoules of thoſe that dye in the *Lord* are bleſſed and reſt from their labours, & enjoy the ſight of God yet ſo as they are in farther expectation of their glory in the laſt day, at which time all fleſh of man ſhall ariſe, and be chaunged, and ſhall appeare and receave from Ieſus Chriſt eternall judgment,

and the glory of the Saints ſhall then bee full, and the Kingdome ſhall be given to God the Father, from which time all things ſhall continue for ever in that beeing, and eſtate which then they ſhall receive; ſo there are three times, if times they may bee called, or parts of Eternitie.

The firſt, the time before Beginning, when the God-head was without the being of any Creature.

The ſecond, the time of the Myſterie, which continueth from the Creation to the Diſſolution of the world.

And the third, the time of the Revelation of the Saints of God; which time is the laſt, and is everlaſting without change.

FINIS.